

TOUGH 'OMBRE

90th Regional Support Command

Summer 2002



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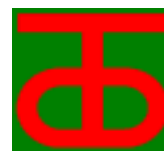
Submission deadline

October 1 is the deadline for submitting articles and photos for the next issue of the magazine. If you have questions, call Chuck Prichard at (501) 771-8974.

On the cover: The technology has changed but basic soldiering remains the same. The top photo shows members of the 35th Division conducting a bridging exercise at Camp Robinson, Ark., in 1941. The bottom photo shows modern day engineers connecting floating bays to span the Arkansas River during a bridge exercise held at Fort Chaffee, Ark., in late July. (Top photo from "Around Little Rock: A Postcard History" by Steven G. and Ray Hanley. Bottom photo by Master Sgt. Fay Hudson, 343rd MPAD)

Tough 'Ombre

Vol. 1 No.2



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Submission of articles and photos by soldiers and other interested parties is encouraged. We prefer standard photos but will accept high quality digital photos, specifically TIF files of 300 dpi or better resolution.

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Kosrae mission is cross between 'Gilligan's Island' and 'Survivor'

By Capt. Jeff Weir
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

Two physician assistants from the Houston-based Detachment 2 of the 4005th U.S. Army Hospital recently embarked on a three-month tour that rivals some of the challenges depicted on those "survivor" reality television shows.

1st Lts. Lisa Cole and Ginger Lew are serving on the tiny island country of Kosrae. It is the eastern-most island in the Federated States of Micronesia about 1,000 miles east of Guam. The 63-square mile island is home to 8,000 people who live predominantly in five villages. The mountainous interior is covered by jungle and white sand beaches.

Just what are a few Tough 'Ombres doing in Kosrae in the first place? Basically there is an agreement between the U.S. and the Federated States of Micronesia, whereby the U.S. will provide infrastructure development and improvement through construction, training, education, and medical assistance. Soldiers participating in this venture are members of the Civic Action Team (CAT).

The PAs have the primary role to provide medical care to a group of twelve Army soldiers. These soldiers are selected to be part of the CAT team after an extensive application process. The secondary mission of the PAs is to provide medical assistance to the local islanders. By virtue of the fact that the team is generally very fit and healthy, the PAs have a great amount of time to devote to their secondary role, referred to as the Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP). This program was truly beneficial to the PAs because they could spend as much time performing MEDCAP duties as long as they did not interfere with their responsibilities to the team. MEDCAP visits take the PAs all over the island.

Cole opted to maximize her immersion into the Kosraean community on a recent 90-day tour. She was responsible for all activities related to the dispensary. Everything from patient care to cleaning the clinic, performing regular inventories, ordering and stocking supplies, writing weekly and monthly situation reports, preparing for quarterly inspection visits from Guam, logging vector control, sanitation records and keeping weather data.

"When my duties were accomplished, I was free to join the local public health clinic staff on their weekly village visits," said Cole. "These generally were well-child visits, diabetes and hypertension screening, some primary care patients and lots of counseling." Most of the villages visited by the soldiers were accessible by van.



A Kosraean woman waits her turn outside a makeshift medical clinic set up on the outskirts of Walung village.

However, the village of Walung is only accessible by boat, and then only when the tide permits. Walung has no roads, no cars, no phones and no electricity. Cole said it reminds her of "Gilligan's Island."

Cole was warmly welcomed by the local doctors and included in all they had to offer. "The University of Washington sponsored a Continuing Medical Conference that I was able to attend along with the local doctors and nurses," she said. It was a well-organized and well-taught educational event that enhanced my knowledge level as well as my clinical skills. During the conference I was able to glean some disturbing bits of information about Kosrae. For instance, there are high rates of teen suicide, unwed teenage mothers, alcoholism and dental decay. Reasons were vague and the Kosraean practitioners, in keeping with their proud demeanors, were loathe to publicly discuss these issues."

"Obesity, heart disease, diabetes and hypertension are at epidemic proportions. The ER doctor from Australia informed us that people in their mid-forties were presenting with acute strokes and heart attacks. Not many of them survive the initial episode."

Western canned food products (Spam, corned beef, vegetable oil for frying) introduced during WWII and islanders drifting away from the local diet of fresh fish, fruits and vegetables contribute to the health issues. It is estimated that 65 percent of Kosraean women over 30 years old are clinically obese.



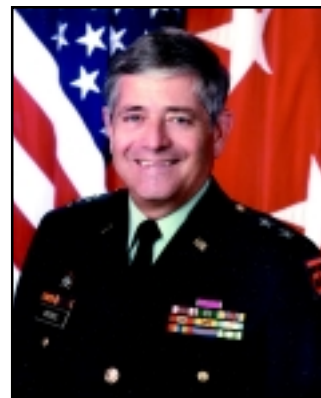
A physician assistant from the 4005th Hospital applies fluoride to help ward off the effects of a sugar-rich diet that plagues many islanders with dental and diabetes problems.

See Island on page 23



Ride to the Sound of the Guns!

by Maj. Gen. David R. Bockel



It always amazes me when we have failures on the Army Physical Fitness Test. It amazes me just as much to find out how many people are committed to scoring the “minimum,” rather than trying to improve from one test to the next. After all, who would you want with you in the foxhole – the person who scored just enough to get by? You’ll end up being held back by that person and it might even get both of you killed!

I’ve got to admit, I’m having a difficult time improving but I hold my own pretty well and I still think I can win one more APFT award before I leave next year. But then again, I’m about the oldest soldier in the command. However, when I was in my late 40’s and early 50’s, I was scoring the maximum on most APFTs and it wasn’t all that difficult to do. It did require commitment, but no more than three or four days a week of doing those three exercises: pushups, sit-ups, two mile run.

Now, as I have gotten older, I see friends and acquaintances fall by the wayside with poor health that could have been avoided. I just came from my 40th high school reunion and, believe it or not, I was in the best physical shape of almost everyone there. To

me, the blessing of still being able to perform physically means an awful lot. I am grateful for the opportunities to get out in the summer heat and the winter cold and exercise.

But nobody is more grateful than our old friend, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Conrad Castle (formerly the top NCO of the 348th Personnel Group located in New Orleans, La.). We almost lost Command Sgt. Maj. Castle a few years ago. Thank God he has recovered from his life-threatening illness. But he had to retire from the Army Reserve. I thought you would be interested in his thoughts on life and the APFT. Maybe a few of you who haven’t performed to standard or are satisfied with minimums will take heart and try to improve your life after reading his story below.

David R. Bockel
Ombre 6

Why Keep Yourself Prepared for the APFT

by Command Sgt. Maj. (Retired) Conrad Castle

The Army Physical Fitness Test is not a difficult test. An acceptable score is rather a low standard. The key is in preparing for it a couple of days each week. Enlisted soldiers can gain promotion points through high performance on the APFT. The few extra dollars each month look nice in your bank account. High APFT scores also look good on an OER or NCOER. However, those are rather superficial reasons for staying in shape.

About seven years ago I was up at 0400. Everything had to be checked for one last time before leaving for the airport and a 0530 flight to Dallas. It was commander’s conference time. As I finished my coffee and banana, my usual breakfast, I was feeling strangely weak and somewhat disoriented. Within 15 minutes, I could barely stand. Breathing was becoming labored. I woke my family and explained that I thought they needed to call my commander and explain that I would take a later flight. Whatever was wrong would certainly pass soon. My daughter felt my forehead and immediately stuck a thermometer in my mouth. She felt certain I had fever, but she wasn’t ready for the 104-degree reading. She called the doctor who sent us straight to the emergency room. By the time we arrived at the hospital the temperature had reached 105 degrees. Breathing was becoming more difficult. I could hear the doctors and nurses mumbling something

to my girls. Tears were rapidly forming and dripping from their cheeks. Everything was starting to spin. Darkness set in.

About 28 hours later I found myself in a hospital bed ... a bed in a private room. They had an oxygen mask on me and tubes going everywhere. My girls explained that I had viral pneumonia. Doctors they had never seen before had been coming into the room to examine me on a regular basis. They had kept me in the emergency room for over 12 hours because they had told my family I wouldn’t be needing a room. My family had been prepared for me to die before the morning was over. As friends began to come visit, after they removed the isolation restrictions, the looks on their faces when they entered the room told me I didn’t look real good yet.

About six days later I could move around the room, providing I didn’t go beyond the length of the oxygen tube and my IV tube. A cardiologist came to see me. He explained that the virus that had caused the viral pneumonia had also damaged my heart. The damage was something he felt certain could be handled quite well with medication. Then he asked me what kind of a physical fitness program I was doing. I explained that I only did some jogging, mostly walking four or five miles a couple of times per week, some push-ups, and some sit-ups. He said that I needed to get back to that as soon as I could. He felt certain it had been a key to

saving my life. All the doctors on the medical team agreed. My heart was incredibly strong. That had been the key to maintaining my life long enough for the virus to run its course and the medications to prevent other infections from forming and complicating treatment.

It would be another four months and two more hospitalizations before I returned to work full-time. The viral pneumonia had triggered an auto-immune disease to surface; what they call Mixed Connective Tissue Disease (MCTD). It frequently takes a major illness to trigger MCTD. It causes the body to take longer to heal. It would lead to a major life-threatening experience three years later. Again, the limited training I could do based upon my profile, had kept the heart strong. The heart, combined with prayers from friends in the military and private life helped pull me through this episode also.

Twice during the past seven years the doctors have given up on me. Twice weekly training for the APFT, and thousands of prayers have fooled the medical professionals.

My health has continued to improve slowly. The doctors are still amazed. They attribute me being alive and my improving health to my having kept my body in good physical condition, my somewhat stubborn attitude and refusing to believe everything they told me, and to a higher power. My priorities in life have

changed. Money isn't even on my list of the ten most important things.

I'm not nearly foolish enough to think I did it on my own. My friends from the Army Reserve were there for me. The cards, the prayers, the phone calls, all helped to keep me going when things were tough. In fact, my friends from the reserve were there for me more than my friends from work.

And so, I ask you the question, "Why keep in shape weekly for the APFT?" Because of you! You do it for yourself, not for the Army. You do it so that you, like me, can beat the odds when the chips are down medically. Nobody can make you train. You have to decide to do it. Don't train for the minimum. You have to run 2 miles in a given time. I say you train for 2 ½ miles in that time. However many push-ups and sit-ups you have to do; train to do 10-15 more in the same time. It is frequently more mental than physical. Your body will let you keep going if you don't let your mind allow you to quit. Don't do it just to improve your APFT score, although that is a good reason. Do it for the self-discipline that you gain from pushing yourself that little extra. Do it so you can be around long enough to start enjoying that retirement check. Do it so you can see your children reach adulthood; so you can enjoy your grandchildren. Do it so you can enjoy a decent quality of life as you grow older.

Training tips can help you max the APFT

There are several programs designed to help you get in shape for the Army Physical Fitness Test. Here is a training program developed by the Vanderbilt University ROTC program. For other training programs, check out hooah4health.com.

Interval training is the quickest way to improve any performance, but, due to fatigue and injury potential, workouts should be performed no more than three times per week with a recommended train-up period of eight to 10 weeks prior to the record APFT. Once relative "failure" is reached during a workout, **DO NOT** perform intervals again for **AT LEAST** 48 hours, although light, easy exercise (including jogging) on non-interval days is OK if desired. "Interval" refers to the rest period taken between successive sets of exercise repetitions. Relative "failure" means that you cannot continue an exercise at a designated speed **OR** that you cannot continue non-stop repetitions within a set without momentary rest.

Pushups

1. Estimate the number you can currently do in two minutes. Use one-half of this number as repetitions for your sets.
2. Use one-minute rest intervals between sets (use a stopwatch).
3. Perform sets until you "fail" (usually by three sets). With pushups this means the inability to continue with consecutive repetitions. In other words, at some point you will want to stop and hold the "leaning rest" for a few seconds before continuing - that is "failure."
4. When you can do four sets without failing, increase the number of reps in a set by 10 percent and repeat steps 3 and 4 indefinitely. As a test, do pushups for one minute as a time trial about a week before the APFT. Don't exercise 72 hours before the APFT.

Situps

1. Same strategy as with pushups except:
2. Situps **MUST** be timed so that in the build-up phase you are performing one every 1.5 seconds (example: if you do 20 situps, you should complete them in no more than 30 seconds). Failure with situps means that your set execution time has significantly increased (you have slowed down).
3. Two weeks prior to the APFT, "sharpen" speed by doing sets of 10 situps in 10 seconds (or faster) with a 30-second rest interval until failure is reached (significant increase in set execution time).
4. Test your readiness a week prior to APFT with a one-minute trial. Don't do anything 72 hours prior to APFT.

2-mile run

1. Determine goal (race) pace per ¼ mile (example: 14 minutes for 2 miles = 1 minute 45 seconds per quarter mile).
2. Do quarters (once around a standard track or approximate this distance between telephone polls on the road) with a two-minute rest interval (walk). Start with four quarters and increase to eight as you improve. Some may only improve by one or two quarters per workout; others will advance rapidly.
3. When you can do eight, increase pace by one or two seconds per quarter each workout, if possible.
4. When you can do eight quarters at a pace 10 to 12 seconds per quarter faster than goal pace, you're ready. No time trial required.

from the CSM's desk . . .

By CSM Roger Dale



There are many factors involved in the readiness of a unit: assigned strength, duty MOSQ and available strength to name a few. One area that has great impact on readiness, but is not so quickly thought of, is personal health and, in particular, dental health. The condition of a soldier's teeth can have a direct impact on whether or not he or she can deploy with the unit. Unfortunately, many soldiers cannot afford regular, preventive dental care, and are not fortunate enough to have dental coverage provided by their civilian employer.

One insurance program that is available, as well as affordable, for Army Reserve soldiers (and one that I can talk about with first-hand experience) is the TRICARE Dental Plan (TDP). This is a program that is operated by United Concordia. Drilling unit members pay only \$7.90 per month for the coverage. The soldier's whole family can be covered for an additional \$19.40. We have been eligible to participate in TDP for several years but, unfortunately, it appears that many soldiers are still unaware of the program. Enrollment is easily accomplished through their website at www.ucci.com. Once reaching the website click on the "TRICARE (TDP)" button at the top of the page and simply follow the directions. You will have the option of enrolling online or downloading enrollment documents and mailing them to United Concordia.

Dentists belonging to the TDP network appear readily available. I live in Russellville, Ark., a town of approximately 23,000 people. There are four local dentists listed as members. I'm sure availability varies from one location to another, but I checked four other smaller towns within 35 miles and found participating dentists in all of them. There is an option on the website that allows you to search for participating dentists in your area. Non-participating dentists can still provide services and file a claim with the TDP.

Many services are covered under this plan including diagnostic check-ups with x-rays, restorative services such as crowns and caps and oral surgery. The percentage of cost paid by the plan varies with the service required. Two diagnostic check-ups per year are completely covered (for the allowable cost), while oral surgery is covered at 50 percent of the allowable cost. This could save a lot of money if you needed a \$350.00 root canal or a \$500.00 crown.

Whatever your personal situation, whether TRICARE Dental can help you or not, look at the soldiers you are responsible for and determine their needs. Would TDP be applicable to them?

Do they even know that it is an option? Find out if it would help them and assist them in finding out about the program.

On another subject, I've had a chance the last few months to visit some of the outstanding soldiers of the 90th RSC. I had the opportunity in late May, and then again in June, to attend two graduations of the Sergeants Major Course at the Sergeants Major Academy, at Fort Bliss, TX. It was a good feeling to watch those Master Sergeants, First Sergeants, Sergeants Major, and Command Sergeants Major walk across the stage and receive diplomas signifying completion of the highest level of the Non-Commissioned Officer Education System. No less significant was to the opportunity to attend a graduation of the Fort Bliss NCO Academy. There I had the privilege to be in the audience as two fine soldiers of the 5035th GSU were recognized as graduates of the Primary Leadership Development Course.

In the Black Hills of South Dakota I observed soldiers of the 468th Chemical Battalion participating in a major chemical exercise. They were working hard, preparing themselves to do their jobs to the best of their abilities. I saw the same professionalism and hard work at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. There, soldiers of the 316th Quartermaster Battalion were participating in a petroleum exercise, transporting and storing petroleum as they would on the battlefield. In all cases, everywhere I have visited, soldiers are approaching training with a seriousness and sense of purpose, aware that there is a very realistic possibility that they will be called upon to perform their jobs in support of either Operation Enduring Freedom or Noble Eagle. This is the reality of the world we now live in.

"Soldiers are our credentials."

Selective Service registration

Although it may not seem logical, male reservists between the ages of 18 and 25 are required to register with the Selective Service. Registration in the system, which can be used if there is a need for a military draft, is required to participate in most federal programs, to include student loan and grant programs. Registration forms are available at all post offices. Visit www.sss.gov for more information.

AKO accounts mandatory

All soldiers, both enlisted and officers, are required to have an account on the Army Knowledge Online system. The AKO account name and password is the standard device used to log on to an ever growing list of official web sites designed to help soldiers with career and personal issues. To establish an account, visit www.us.army.mil and click on the "I'm A New User" button.

Family MATTERS

By Jane Bockel
Family Program Advisory Council



Three or four times a year, my husband and I meet with a group of volunteers known as FPAC. That stands for Family Program Advisory Council. It is comprised of volunteers from (hopefully) all subordinate commands who have been selected by the commanders of those commands. They are to serve as a liaison between those commands and the commander of the 90th RSC. Specifically, they are charged with communicating with the units under that command in order to be sure that the families of the 90th RSC are informed, that they resolve any issues and that the Commander of the 90th RSC is made aware of any problems. To put it bluntly, this group of volunteers has the ear of my husband, and if you have not been successful in working an issue through the chain of command, this is a way for families to get it to the top.

Of course, issues should be solved at the unit level when possible and for families, one avenue is through the unit's Family Readiness Group. Every unit should have a Family Readiness Group in place and, if that is not the case, that is the first thing that needs to be fixed. FRGs are usually visible in doing such things as family day activities and bake sales. However, their main function is to make the Army Reserve family self-reliant and to be an avenue for accessing information for families. If your family has an issue that needs to be addressed, start with your FRG. If it can't be resolved at that level, make a request that the FPAC representative be told so that he or she can take it to one of our FPAC meetings. If you don't have an FRG, call your FPAC representative. Their names are listed below. The point is that the Army knows soldiers will stay in the Army if their families are taken care of and that's what we want for the 90th. If, by chance, you don't believe that the commander of your (or your spouse's) unit thinks family readiness is important, you don't need to feel thwarted. You have access.

Another function of our FPAC is to bring issues forward for the Army Family Action Program (AFAP). This program solicits

changes for improvement of the quality of life for the Army family. An example of a successful AFAP issue is the increase in commissary visits from twelve to twenty-four annually. So, if you have a legitimate issue with a suggestion for improvement, get in touch with your FPAC representative.

One other note, I recently received an e-mail that was sent out by Lt. Col. Scott Sanders. I don't know how far the message went, but there was information about mobilization that is worth repeating. Apparently, when some soldiers have been notified that they are going to be mobilized, they have "jumped the gun" and done some things to prepare that have created problems for themselves. According to Sanders, here's a checklist for soldiers who have been alerted.

- Get your personal affairs in order.
- Assemble required documents such as marriage license, birth certificates and/or adoption and legal guardianship documents for children, wills, powers of attorney, court orders for legal custody, proof of citizenship, lists of credit cards and other accounts, insurance policies, vehicle titles and registration papers.
- Do not leave your job.
- Do not quit school.
- Do not cancel your rent or move out.
- "Alerted" does not mean "mobilized."

As we all become more aware of the dangers in our world, it is nice to know that the contributions of those who serve in the military are appreciated. I have never been as proud as I am today of the men and women I am privileged to know because my husband chose to be a "Citizen Soldier." Thanks to all of you who are serving and to all of your families who support you. I hope this article is one more way of showing that my husband and I support you as well.

Family Program Advisory Council

90th RSC Family Support Director - Al Balent (501) 771-7838

52d Engineer Battalion - **Martha Kirkpatrick** (Chairwoman)
75th Division - **Sandra Landry**
90th RSC - **Marcy Ellis**
HHC 90th RSC - **Debra Westmoreland**
90th RSG - **Sue Bennett**
95th Division - **Jan Mason**
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348th Personnel Group - **Gloria Matthias**
377thTSC - **Judy Barrattini**
420th Engineer Brigade - **Sarah Navarro**
647th Area Support Group - **Debra Selisky**
Advisory Member - **Jane Bockel**
Advisory Member - **Linda Sholar**
Advisory Member - **Pat Moore**

46th MHD mobilization

By Maj. Keith Dover
Commander, 46th MHD

The 46th Military History Detachment (MHD) returned to its home station in June following a nine-month deployment to the nation's capitol in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

The three-member unit, based at the 90th Regional Support Command headquarters at Camp Pike in North Little Rock, Ark., had only been in existence for a few months before receiving the call to duty. Unit members had just received their formal military history training in July of 2001 at the United States Army Reserve Command headquarters in Atlanta, and were making plans to conduct a mission at

the National Training Center when they were mobilized. "An MHD is not a place to hide out," said Lt. Col. Tom Ryan, 90th RSC command historian. "The MHD is a valuable asset to the Army and can be called upon for rapid deployment to gather information right from the area of operations so it can be preserved."

The 46th received its marching orders on Oct. 1, 2001 to support the war on terrorism by being mobilized to the Military District of Washington (MDW) to work at the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, D.C. The 46th, along with the

305th MHD of the 99th RSC from Pennsylvania, was assigned to the CMH as part of the "Operation Noble Eagle MHD Task Force." Two other units were also mobilized as part of the Task Force; the 311th MHD out of the 77th RSC in New York was assigned to document the Army Reserve response to the World Trade Center in New York City, and the 90th



A highlight of the 46th MHD's mobilization came when the unit was selected to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns on June 14, the Army's 227th birthday. The members of the unit (upper inset), Spc. Kelly Strand, Maj. Keith Dover and Master Sgt. Donna Majors, prepare for the ceremony. Unit members, along with a tomb guard, (left inset) render a final salute during the ceremony. (Photos by Roger Wright, Army Center for Military History and Sgt. Bill Miller, 90th MHD)

makes mark on

HISTORY

MHD (sister unit to the 46th from San Antonio) was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve (OCAR), also in the MDW to document U.S. Army Reserve deployments.

The mission of the 46th and 305th was to document the Army's response to the attacks on the Pentagon, which included Department of Defense (DoD) civilians as well. They conducted oral history interviews - the mainstay mission of history detachments - along with the collection of photographs, artifacts, the writing of abstracts and gathering supporting documentation to substantiate information gained in their historical preservation and fact-finding mission. Their work will remain important for generations to come. "It's not just for future historians, but to enable the Army leadership to review and plan for any such future contingencies by the lessons learned that we capture through our work," says Maj. Robert Smith, MHD task force commander.

The 46th made history as it was the first 90th RSC unit to ever "mobilize and deploy from its home station RSC in such a short timeframe," said Col. Randy Erwin, 90th RSC deputy chief of staff G-3, as he made comments during a welcome home ceremony held recently at the 90th RSC. The unit also shared "making history" along with the 90th MHD since this was the first time two MHDs out of the same RSC have been mobilized for such a mission. Other milestones for the 46th included the promotion of Spec. Kelly Strand and Master Sgt. Donna Majors reaching her 30-year service anniversary. Another noteworthy historical event came on June 14, 2002 (227th Birthday of the U.S. Army) when the 46th performed a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery before a crowd of about 300 people.

Although MHDs are small units, they have an enormous task in piecing together the information and preserving it for the CMH. Some of the oral history interviews conducted yielded vivid and sometimes sobering accounts of the events that unfolded on September 11, 2001, including sightings of the plane as it hit the Pentagon



Maj. Gen. David Bockel (*left*), Capt. Keith Dover and Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Dale talk to a member of the construction crew working to repair the damage done to the Pentagon during terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. Dover's unit was responsible for preserving historically significant items found during the reconstruction effort. (*Photo by Spc. Kelly Strand, 46th MHD*)

and the eyewitness and first hand accounts of the rescuers that responded, both military and civilian. This was sometimes a very unpleasant mission for task force members as some of them were also tasked with interviewing survivors and close friends or relatives of the attack. Members visited the attack site often through the course of their duties and morale was boosted as they accompanied Maj. Gen. David Bockel and Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Dale on a tour of the devastated area during a visit.

The MHDs were not totally safe and secure in their CONUS assignment however, since the heart of America's military and government was attacked and dubbed by some as a "war zone." How prophetic this observation later became as anthrax made its invisible assault on the MDW and governmental offices in Washington, an enemy which the task force was not trained to combat. Just weeks

after their deployment, the mailroom at Fort McNair tested positive for anthrax and, following the sudden illness of the CMH mailroom supervisor, the mission took on a much different meaning. The mailroom supervisor returned to work later with no further problems and task force members continued with their mission.

Despite the hidden dangers of anthrax and complexities of their historical mission, the MHDs tallied some impressive numbers for their collection efforts: 531 oral history interviews; 122 documents; 4,402 photographs and 55 artifacts. Much of the information gathered by the task force will be part of an official Department of Defense monograph that will be released sometime in the future.

To learn more about U.S. Army Military History, visit the Army homepage at www.army.mil and click on the link to the CMH.

Grand Prairie building named for extra tough World War II 'ombre



Maj. Gen. David Bockel (left) and others congratulate James F. Flowers Jr.(center) after unveiling the sign that officially dedicates the main building at the Grand Prairie Armed Forces Reserve Complex. The ceremony was held at the central Texas facility in late July.

James F. Flowers was born March 16, 1914 in Dallas, Texas and currently lives in Richardson, Texas.

His military career began when he enlisted as a private in the Texas National Guard in March, 1930. With the exception of a three-year break to concentrate on building his career as an oilfield drilling engineer, Flowers served as a part-time infantry soldier until the outbreak of World War II.

In April 1942, Private Flowers reported to Fort Knox, Kentucky, to attend basic training and become a tankerman in the regular Army. While at Fort Knox, he was accepted into the Officer Candidate School. Flowers was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Armor branch in April, 1943.

He was first assigned to the 712th Tank Battalion in September 1943 and underwent continuous training in the United States and England. The battalion was assigned to the 90th Infantry Division in June 1944 and fought with the Tough 'Ombres across France and Germany.

On July 10, 1944, 1st Lt. Flowers was assigned as a platoon leader of the battalion's C Company, when he volunteered his four tanks to help out an infantry battalion that was encircled by the Germans in an area known as Hill 122 near Periers, France. Flowers' tanks, with accompanying infantry soldiers, fought slowly through the hedgerows toward the trapped battalion. The mission was going well until Flowers' unit encountered the

Germans' anti-tank guns.

His tank took a direct hit that pierced the side of the vehicle and ignited the ammunition, engulfing the tank in flames. Flowers pulled the gunner to safety and leapt off the burning tank. When he hit the ground he realized that his right foot had been blown away.

Using his belt for a tourniquet, Flowers treated his wound and rounded up the survivors of the other tanks - all of which were knocked out by the anti-tank guns - and the few remaining infantry soldiers. He led the group to fight off an attack by German infantry soldiers. When the fight was over, Flowers ordered a withdrawal. He, his gunner and an infantry soldier were wounded too badly to go with the rest of the group so they stayed on the battlefield with hopes that litter teams would soon come to pick them up.

The three men laid on a hedgerow, at first listening to the Germans moving on the other side and later watching them dig fighting positions in the field. Although a German medic did bandage their burns, the other enemy soldiers ignored Flowers and his companions.

The next day, American artillery bombarded the area in preparation for another attack. One of the shells exploded between Flowers and the infantryman. A piece of shell took off Flowers' left leg just below the knee. He switched the tourniquet from his right leg to his left. He bandaged the infantryman with strips of cloth torn from a shirt. The gunner was



James F. Flowers Jr. in 1942

still suffering from his original wounds.

The three men survived another night on the field, managing to avoid any more of the constantly falling artillery shells. American infantry troops reached Flowers' little group the next day but not before the infantryman died from his wounds.

For his actions, Flowers was nominated for the Medal of Honor but was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross and a Purple Heart. For previous actions he was awarded the Silver Star and a Bronze Star with "V" device for valor.

Flowers was discharged in November 1947. Back in the civilian world, he attended Southern Methodist University before going to work in the prosthetics section of the Veterans' Administration in Waco, Texas. He moved to the Dallas, Texas Veterans' Administration Hospital in 1958 and set up the first Prosthetics Treatment Center in the nation. His five-state operation served as the model for the rest of the VA system. He retired in 1973.

5045th MP named Fort Sill's top NCO

(Editor's note: This story originally appeared in the May 2, 2002 issue of the Fort Sill CANNONEER.)

Story and photo

By Spc. Krista K. Greeff

Fort Sill CANNONEER

FORT SILL, Okla. - Sgt. Kyle Hill, of the 5045th Garrison Support Unit, is Fort Sill's NCO of the Year.

Hill, an Army Reserve soldier attached to the 40th Military Police Detachment, won the post's top noncommissioned officer honors in March.

Hill's unit was activated Oct. 3, 2001, to help with Fort Sill's force protection. He has been on active and reserve duty for more than six years. He said working in the Military Police field has long been his dream.

"Joining the Army allowed me to be an MP at an early age and gave me the opportunity to do something I love, as well as take advantage of all of the Army's benefits," Hill said. "I knew full well what to expect going from active duty to the reserve and then back to active duty again, so my transition was smooth. All of the basics were still strong in my memory. It wasn't hard to pull them out and use them to help me with the boards." Hill said

Hill competed in the 40th MP Detachment's boards, first — the NCO of the Month board, then the NCO of the Quarter board — the equivalent of a company- or battery-level board.

After winning, he represented the unit at the Fort Sill Garrison Command's NCO of the Quarter board. As the winner of the Garrison Command's NCO of the Quarter board, he competed in the Fort Sill NCO of the Quarter board.

The Fort Sill NCO of the Quarter board is comprised of four events: the Army Physical Fitness Test, a Common Task Training test, an in ranks inspection and a board appearance.

The four winners of the quarter boards then compete for the U.S. Army Field Artillery Center/Fort Sill Soldier and NCO of the Year, which only requires a board appearance.

"Winning the title of Fort Sill NCO of the Year is such a tremendous honor. To be honest, I was surprised at my selection. I competed against several outstanding and worthy NCOs," Hill said.

"I believe these boards are great. They develop you a lot as a soldier. You learn a lot about the military by going to the boards," Hill said.

Hill said day-to-day work is what makes a good NCO. "Just the fact that I went to the board and competed doesn't make me the best NCO, though. It just means I studied and was smart when I needed to be. A true test of being an NCO is my every day actions," he said. When it comes to preparing for the boards, Hill said to seek out the experienced in the unit for help.

"The best advice I could probably give is to seek mentoring from senior NCOs. They have a wealth of experience that they can relate and can tell you what the members of the board are looking for. I owe much thanks to my platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Baker. Without his help and support, I couldn't have made



St. Kyle Hill, 5045th Garrison Support Unit, Fort Sill's NCO of the Year, replaces a tire on one of the Fort Sill Military Police Bike Patrol's bikes. Hill is NCOIC of the bike patrol.

it this far," Hill said.

1st Lt. James Holley, 5045th MP Detachment commander, said Hill is the best junior NCO he has right now. "He's a very hard charger. He gets the job done," he said.

Holley said he is very proud of Hill's accomplishments. "Just having a soldier compete at that level says a lot about that troop and the soldiers in the reserve unit," said Holley. "It gives me a pretty hooah feeling knowing my soldier did that and is still looking to better himself."

Hill said he received prizes including a recognition ceremony, \$125 in cash, \$150 in saving bonds, \$150 in AAFES gifts certificates and plaques and coins for winning the NCO of the Quarter board. He said he is not yet sure what he'll receive for winning Fort Sill NCO of the Year distinction.

Hill is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Fort Sill Military Police Bike Squad.

BRIDGEX 2002 sp

For decades Army leadership has recited the mantra: “train as you fight,” but that philosophy is sometimes easier said than done. Soldiers assigned to engineer units responsible for erecting bridges in combat situations know that reality all too well.

There are only two places in the country where bridge companies can practice their mission - Fort Drum, N.Y. and Fort Chaffee, Ark. Of those two choices, only Fort Chaffee offers a significant river with enough land on either bank to practice a large-scale bridging mission that is often required in combat.

“There really is no comparison. Without Fort Chaffee, these units would never get the training they need. That’s what makes this exercise so important,” said Ken Heaney, the staff operations and training officer for the 353rd Engineer Group, a 90th RSC unit located in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Heaney was responsible for putting together Bridgex 2002, the latest iteration of a training event that is held every two years at Fort Chaffee.

This year’s exercise doubled up on the success of the last one. In 2000, bridge crews put one floating span across the Arkansas River in less than four hours. This year, soldiers were able to erect two float bridges in the same amount of time. The exercise was the focal point of a two-week annual training mission conducted by more than 1,400 soldiers from Army Reserve, National Guard and active duty units from around the country. During the first week, most units conducted training lanes to hone individual and team soldier skills. Then the focus shifted to bridge building, Heaney said.

Seven bridge companies - three USAR multi-role companies, two active duty multi-role companies and two National Guard float bridge companies - formed the core of the units participating in the exercise. Soldiers from various chemical, medical, military police and maintenance units also participated.

In addition to the floating - or “ribbon” - bridges, soldiers also practiced erecting “Bailey” and “Medium Girder” bridges that are most often used to span dry obstacles such as deep ditches and anti-tank trenches.

“Although the river crossing is the most significant event, the multi-role companies also needed the opportunity to practice some of the other techniques. We set up the scenario so they would have to split their assets and conduct two different types of operations at the same time, just like they will be called upon to do in a real combat situation,” Heaney said.

“This is exactly kind of training we need to keep up our skills,” said Lt. Col. Larry Mahar, commander of the 489th Engineer Battalion. “This is the first time many of our soldiers have been on the water since they were taught (bridging operations) at their MOS school.”

A truck delivers a floating “bay” into the river. The 6-meter long bays are joined together to form what is commonly called a “ribbon bridge.”



(Photos by Bill Harris, 90th RSC Safety Office.)

boats training gap



by Chuck Prichard
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

Hedden earns MacArthur award

By Capt. Jeff Weir
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

Capt. Ralph Scott Hedden has been on a roll recently. His determination and dedication have brought well-deserved recognition to himself and his unit.

Until last year, Hedden was the commander of the 360th Chemical Company in Texarkana, Texas. Early in 2001, the 360th was selected as one of the best chemical units in the entire Army and received the Sibert Award. The 21st Chemical Company of the 82nd Airborne Division represented the active Army while the 360th represented the Army Reserve and National Guard.

Named for the first commander of the Chemical Warfare Service, the Sibert Award is presented to the top two companies that have the best scores in common task testing, weapons qualification and physical fitness. The unit's performance record is also scored based on mission results, outside evaluations of training, maintenance readiness rates, safety, discipline, reenlistment rates and various inspections.

Hedden is quick to dispel any notion that he single-handedly led his company to distinction. "I just happened to be the commander at the right time," said Hedden. "In no way is the Sibert award for



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki presents Capt. Scott Hedden with his MacArthur award.

the 360th Chemical Company the result of any one person. The NCO leadership of that unit is reflected in everything they do," said Hedden. "I may have sold a plan to the NCOs but they made it happen. And once good things start happening then recruiting improves, next thing you know, you've got the bodies to make more good things happen."

In March, Hedden was notified that he had been one of 16 officers chosen to receive the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Award. The MacArthur Award annually

recognizes the best company grade officers who demonstrate outstanding leadership. MacArthur exemplified these traits in his commitment to duty, honor and country.

In May, Hedden traveled to Washington, D.C. with his mother, son and daughter for four days of recognition, honors and tours culminating in a Pentagon courtyard ceremony where Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki presented each recipient an engraved 15-pound bronze bust of MacArthur.

"Receiving the MacArthur Award is a great honor but I think the fact that my unit earned Sibert recognition the year before had some bearing on the MacArthur decision board. I owe the leaders and soldiers of the 360th a debt of gratitude for being there everyday," he said. "The 360th didn't gloss itself up just to be submitted for the award and then wait for the recognition. They were recognized for being what they have been for quite a while – an outstanding well-lead team." Unit Administrator Altha Cumming, who is also a NCO in the unit said, "Capt. Hedden was a great leader and the soldiers hated to see him leave."

Since receiving the award, Hedden has been promoted major. He is now serves as an AGR officer in the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Force Development.

238th Maint. deployment prompts coins, proposal

Members of the 238th Maintenance Company of San Antonio, Texas were mobilized recently for deployment to Uzbekistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Maj. Gen. David Bockel, 90th RSC Commander, visited the soldiers as they prepared for deployment at North Fort Hood, Texas in July. Besides speaking with the soldiers individually, he presented a Commanding General's coin to several members of the company who demonstrated initiative above and beyond their duty requirements as pointed out by the 238th's commander, 1st Lt. Rick Knapp. The soldiers looked forward to accomplishing their mission and returning home to family and friends.

One soldier, Staff Sgt. Robert Rodriguez, had not yet figured out a way to propose to his girlfriend who was visiting the unit. As an unusual treat, Bockel was informed of Rodriguez's impending marriage proposal to his girlfriend, who was sitting nearby. When it was suggested that the whole company serve as witness to the proposal, Rodriguez prepared for his moment. The company came to the position of attention, marched directly to where Rodriguez's girlfriend, Genivieve Perez, was sitting and halted. Knapp called Rodriguez to the front and requested the young lady to join him. Rodriguez dropped to one knee and asked the big question. She accepted.



Reservist recognizes civilian employer

By Sgt. Rodney Ragsdale
345th MPAD

Soldiers who are twice the citizen sometimes find themselves performing a juggling act in order to keep up with their military and civilian career job responsibilities. At times this can be a struggle without the support of an understanding civilian boss. The Department of Defense tries to bridge that gap of understanding and recognizes patriotic employers through the Employer Support of the National Guard and Reserve Patriot Award.

Staff Sgt. Maria Prado of the 340th Quartermaster Company in San Antonio, Texas, nominated her civilian boss, University Hospital Systems Police Chief Leonard H. Sims, for the award. Prado is a police officer for the University Health Systems (UHS) in San Antonio, Texas. Additionally, she recruits for her military unit, attends weekend drills and is a veteran of Desert Storm. "The UHS chief and lieutenant make me feel like I'm apart of a team. They have always given me the time that I need to complete my military obligations and that is why I nominated them for this award," said Prado.

Capt Adonis Basto, also of the 340th Quarter Master Company, teamed with UHS Police Lieutenant Bill Gallagher and UHS Vice President George Hernandez to coordinate the event and presented the appreciation plaque to Chief Sims. "It's not just me, it is the entire UHS and coordinating departments that make this happen. Thank you," said Chief Sims.



Capt. Adonis Basto, Staff Sgt. Maria Prado with Chief Leonard Sims and George Hernandez.

"Chief Sims gives this department a mature leader who can make sound judgement calls. He is very worthy of this award and I thank officer Prado for nominating him," said George Hernandez, UHS Vice President.

If you are two times the citizen and work for a civilian employer that understands the complexity of military life then nominate them for the 2002 Employer Support of the National Guard and Reserve Patriot Award.

Award your employer!

Recognize your boss for his or her support of National Guard and Reserve members. Nominate him for a "My Boss is a Patriot" award. Your employer will receive a Department of Defense Certificate of Appreciation and a Patriot lapel pin. All members of the National Guard and Reserve are eligible to nominate their employers.

Go to www.esgr.org and click on the "Reward Your Employer" link.

AMSA wins safety award

The Commanding General's Safety Award for 2001 was recently presented to Area Maintenance Support Activity-7 in Corpus Christi, Texas. The Presentation was made to shop supervisor Grimes Archer by Mr. Lester Ellis, command executive officer, acting on behalf of Maj. Gen. David R. Bockel.

The 18 AMSAs and subshops and six Equipment Concentration Sites are juggled in the area of safety enforcement, safety promotion, accident reduction and risk management. The competition is tough according to Walter Hooks, command safety officer, but AMSA-7's overall program was classified as clearly superior. AMSA-7 was runner-up last year.

NCO's career goes up in smoke

Marijuana recently led to the end of a 90th Regional Support Command noncommissioned officer's career at a Fort Bliss, Texas court-martial.

The sergeant first class, a retention NCO in El Paso, was arrested for possession of 30 pounds of marijuana. The drug was discovered by a narcotic-sniffing dog at a roadside stop between Juarez, Mexico and El Paso.

He was charged with Article 122a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, "Possession with the intent to distribute," and found guilty. He could have gotten a maximum sentence of 20 years,

but the sentence passed by the military judge was a Bad Conduct Discharge, two years confinement and reduction to the pay grade of private E-1.

The NCO had more than 20 years of qualifying service for reserve retirement. He had received his 20-year letter qualifying him to receive benefits at age 60. Due to his Bad Conduct Discharge, he will not be eligible to receive any retirement benefits at age 60 and can never draw any veteran's benefits.

The case is automatically being appealed.

Food inspectors insure groceries

By Capt. Jeff Weir
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

Camp As-Sayliyah, Qatar ... The goal of the enemy is to introduce a foreign object into the body of an American soldier causing the soldier to die, become incapacitated or otherwise incapable of performing his duties. These foreign objects usually enter the body as high-velocity, metallic projectiles or fragments.

While such wounds are devastating, it is the quiet, unseen world of water- and food-borne illnesses which actually cause the most casualties in war, according to Lt. Col. Craig Carter, commander of the 994th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Services).

The Austin, Texas-based unit performs two missions. The more

important, yet often overlooked, mission is that of food inspection.

"We sort of function as a military board of health in a sense," said Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie White.

For the most part, deployed soldiers eat prepared meals or MREs (Meal, Ready to Eat). Since the Department of Defense is the executive agent for food safety on all military operations, veterinary units must inspect both MREs and all the ingredients used in prepared food.

"We inspect food purchased locally as well as that which arrives from the states. We check expiration dates and temperatures – frozen means frozen – and ensure everything going into the soldier's mouth is fit for consumption," White said. "This is

Vets keep working dogs on the job

By Capt. Jeff Weir
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

Al Udiyd Air Base, Qatar ... "Ben" was only in country a day before he was sent to the hospital. Air Force Staff Sgt. Marsha White, a member of Ben's unit, accompanied Ben to the examination room. Dr. (Lt. Col.) Craig Carter poked, prodded and inspected Ben from head to foot and pronounced him fit for duty. Ben is a four-year-old with a mission to patrol and protect.

Carter, commander of the 994th Medical Detachment-Veterinary Services, has two missions. The first is to provide medical services to all military working dogs in the region. The second is to inspect all food items destined for American troops in the Persian Gulf region as well as those deployed in central Asia.

The Austin, Texas-based 994th has 25 soldiers assigned to it from several states including Maine, Kentucky, California and Oklahoma.

The animal medicine mission predominantly involves the care of military working dogs such as Ben from the 27th Security Forces Squadron, Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. Ben reported for duty at Al Udiyd Air Base in Qatar for a tour of duty as an explosives detector and patrol dog. Occasionally, the unit may be asked to assist with local animals such as livestock or wild animals that occasionally cross paths with humans.

During Ben's visit to Camp Andy, a tent city located on the sprawling air base, Carter and Air Force Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie White talked about their role in the war on terrorism as they examined the dog.

"It's quite an honor to work with the dogs, their handlers and the vet techs," said Carter. "... to get the opportunity to come over here and work with these incredibly trained dogs. The ultimate thing regarding the dogs is they're here for one reason – to protect human life, sometimes at the expense of their own."

"This was the first veterinary unit activated after 9/11 and we will make the best of it and do everything that needs to be done," said Carter. "We're proud to be part of the 90th. We know the



Dr. (Lt. Col.) Craig Carter examines Ben, a military working dog, as Ben's handler, Air Force Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie White, holds the leash.

footsteps we're walking in."

Carter, a Vietnam veteran, said the 994th has a big job to do and they don't know how long it will take. He knows that after a while, the soldiers in his unit will develop routines to best maximize their time. "Any time you arrive in a new place, you've got to figure out what works best," he said.

"If the dogs are healthy and functioning well we don't see them. We have weekly checks and we check out foreign forces dogs who don't have veterinary support," said White, who is a biomed major, training to be a veterinarian at Texas A&M.

are good to go

the last stop for MREs going to Afghanistan, Pakistan and other nations in central Asia.”

The MRE has produced lasting memories for just about all soldiers since the early 1980s. While the menu has changed many times over the years, the MRE’s basic appearance has not. Gone are earlier specialties such as ham and chicken loaf and freeze-dried pork patties, replaced by tortellini, beef stroganoff and M&Ms. Yet, the MRE remains the basic field ration of deployed troops around the world. The duty day of the food inspection soldiers of the 994th revolve around these things. The 25-soldier unit was the first veterinary unit activated in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, with the first four soldiers reporting for duty on Nov. 18, 2001.

Within three months the unit was deployed forward to ARCENT headquarters at Camp As-Sayliyah in Qatar in the Persian Gulf. Camp As-Sayliyah, Al Udied Airbase and Camp Snoopy (yes, Camp Snoopy) make up the forward staging area in Qatar for troops and supplies whose next stop is Afghanistan.

Food Inspector Spc. John Gelsthorpe said he does a lot of paperwork. “We do a lot of paperwork for food in transit. We must be able to track everything, not only where it went, but where it came from. We also work with dining facilities to ensure food safety. We strive to get along well with everyone. It makes the time go by easier when you get along.”

The duty day involves inspectors being summoned whenever food items arrive at the warehouse, cold storage or a dining facility. They carry radios that keep them in touch with the unit. The 994th technicians inspect everything before accepting it to inventory. They dig through cases of produce by the truckload.

“An apple on top of the pile can be very different from those at the bottom,” said Gelsthorpe. “We have had attempts by suppliers

See Inspectors on page 23



Sgt. Raymond Browner (left) and Spc. John Gelsthorpe inspect a batch of MREs.

MRE

M . T



M : MREs last forever.

T : They last three years if kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit. They may only last a month at temperatures above 120 degrees.

M : MREs have 5000 calories per meal.

T : MREs have about 3000 calories per meal. If you have a sedentary job you can still get fat if you eat three a day. They are designed to feed soldiers who may not have access to food regularly and are fighting and/or marching daily.

The highest calorie content is usually the main menu item but also include bakery products, cheese, candy and beverage-based products. The least caloric parts are the ancillary items such as coffee, ketchup and hot sauces. The secondary products like fruits, vegetables and jellies round out the menu.

M : MREs offer only a few food choices.

T : That’s the way it was twenty years ago, but not so today. In addition to the general menu changing every year, with 95 new items approved, today’s political environment has evolved to the point that MREs are also ethnically tailored to certain demographics.

There are now vegetarian, kosher and other diet-restrictive menus available not only for servicemen but for those ethnic groups that the U.S. may be helping in other parts of the world.

Here is a list of some of the most recent MRE choices:

Chili macaroni, fruit-wet pack (pineapple and mixed), chewy fudge brownie, grilled chicken, lemon tea (in six menus), tavern nuts, grilled beef steak, Mexican rice, butter flavored white rice, chicken parmesan, pasta primavera (vegetarian), cheese tortellini (vegetarian), jalapeno cheese spread.

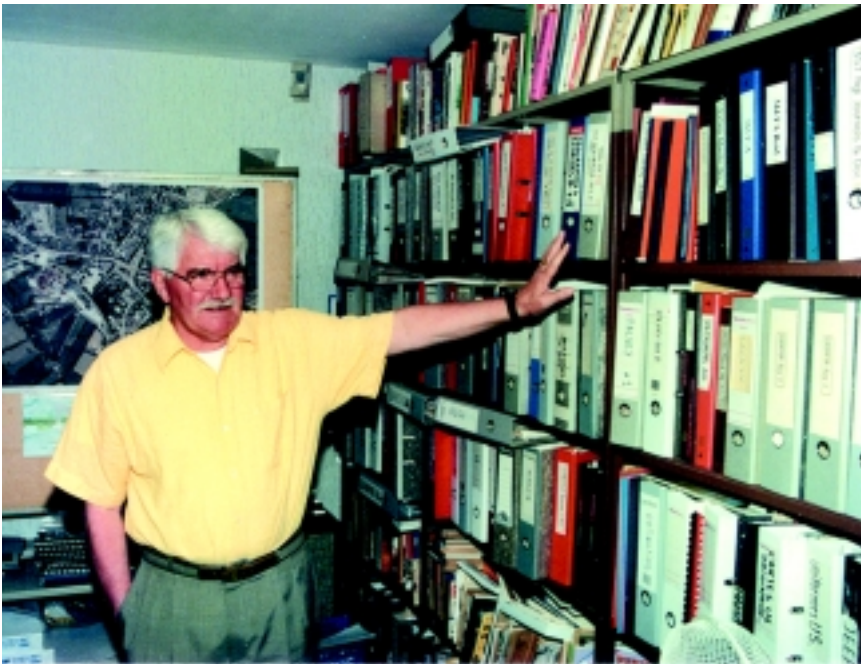
HENRI LEVAUFRE

By Chuck Prichard
90th RSC Public Affairs Office

In Ray Bradbury's novel "Fahrenheit 451," books are banned so some people take on the task of committing a great literary work to memory. These people become living versions of the books they memorize, even changing their names to the title of the work.

If Henri Levaufre were a character in the novel, his name could likely be "The Unabridged History of the 90th Division in World War II."

Levaufre, a resident of Periers, France, is literally a walking encyclopedia of how the 90th liberated his hometown during the Normandy Invasion. Two large rooms he added to the back of his house are overflowing with 90th memorabilia and documentation that he has collected over decades of studying the battles that raged in and around Periers.



Henri Levaufre, a resident of Periers, France, built two large rooms onto his home to hold his collection of 90th Division materials. The binders on these shelves hold biographies, journals and other personnel items of Tough 'Ombres who fought to liberate the Levaufre's hometown during the Normandy Invasion.

But Levaufre is so familiar with the stored information that he rarely consults the materials when he talks to visitors who frequently stop by or call his home. Hardly a day goes by that he does not provide a tour of the fields around Periers to veterans, family members or history buffs. He walks the fields, stopping every so often to point out terrain features and describe which units fought where. In some places, he can not only point out fighting positions but tell visitors the names of the soldiers who dug and fought from them.

"The 90th is like family to me. I want to know as much as I can about the men and their families," said Levaufre.

He really became interested in the 90th in the late 1960's although the division first touched his life more than 20 years earlier.

Some of Levaufre's most vivid childhood memories are of the German occupation of his homeland. He was nine years old when the Third Reich took over France. He was an inquisitive 13-year-old when American forces liberated the Normandy region.

For most of the war, Levaufre's little town was untouched and life pretty much went on as it did before the Germans took over. "About two percent of the people joined the French Resistance. Another two percent were German sympathizers. I would say the other 96 percent just tried to keep living as they did before the war," said Levaufre, who speaks fluent English with a charming accent.

But that tranquility was shattered in the days following the Normandy Invasion.

Like residents of most occupied French towns, the people of Periers had little contact with neighboring towns. Radios were almost non-existent. There was a definite dearth of information about exactly what was going on with the war.

"But we could see the planes flying over and we could tell when things were happening by the number of the airplanes," Levaufre said.

On June 6, 1944, many planes filled the sky over Periers. "We did not go to school because we knew that something big was happening. ... My father talked to a gendarme on the road and he said there was an invasion but that was all we knew," Levaufre said.

Eventually the invasion came to Periers. The Levaufres' house was destroyed by bombers and most of the rest of the town was heavily damaged. "My father kept moving us to the north, from farm to farm, away from the fighting," Levaufre said.

In late July, Levaufre's father announced that liberation had arrived. "He said 'The Americans are on the road. We are free!'"

As the family made its way back to Periers, Levaufre got his first glimpse of the Americans. "They gave us chocolate and cigarettes. We saw them in the convoys, moving around, but we did not see the actual fighting," Levaufre said.

As the war wound down and the people of Periers got on with their lives, Levaufre and his younger brothers explored the battlefields around the town. "It was an adventure to us," he said with a smile.

A few years later, his exploration of the same fields was fueled by work. After finishing school, Levaufre was hired by a power

is THE FRENCH CONNECTION

company and put in charge of bringing electricity to Periers and the rural areas surrounding it. As Levaufre and his crew surveyed the sites for power lines, it was common for them to find artifacts from the war. He began to collect some of the articles, especially the helmets. "But I did not know whether they were American or German," he said.

It was during the survey trips when Levaufre developed a curiosity about what exactly happened during the war. "Many people had seen and heard many things but no one knew exactly what took place," Levaufre said of his fellow residents.

So Levaufre began to read books about the war but he found nothing that spelled out what happened in Periers.

His curiosity got the best of him and he took a bold step in 1964 when Periers and many other towns in the Normandy region marked the twentieth anniversary of the invasion. At an official ceremony he saw a man in civilian clothes that people in the crowd identified as retired General Omar Bradley. Levaufre got the man's attention and took a picture of himself shaking the man's hand. Later, he saw the man at another event and asked him to sign a book. During that encounter the man informed Levaufre that he was not Bradley, but retired General Joe Collins, who commanded VII Corps when it conducted the Normandy Invasion.

Levaufre later sent Collins the picture of them shaking hands along with a letter asking him for help in finding information about the battle of Periers. "I did not know whether he could do anything but he wrote me and said he was sending my letter to the military history department in Washington," Levaufre said.

A member of the staff at the Center for Military History sent Levaufre a copy of the book "Breakout and Pursuit" by Martin Blumenson. The book is the Army's official history of the fight for Normandy.



Levaufre tells a group of 90th veterans, family members and other visitors about the battle of Hill 122. The hard fought victory by the Americans was key to the liberation of Periers. (See related article about Jim Flowers on page 10)

Many of the exhibits in the 90th RSC's new heritage education center will benefit from Levaufre's work. A ceremony will be held in August to officially open the center at the 90th headquarters building, located in North Little Rock, Ark.



When he read the book, Levaufre recognized photos of the "T-O" patch that adorned some of the helmets he had collected. "I did not know what the 'T-O' was until I read that book. Now I knew that it meant 'Texas and Oklahoma' and that was the insignia of the 90th," Levaufre said.

Spurred by this discovery, Levaufre wrote a letter to the president of the 90th Division Association asking for more information about the division. Members of the association - the vast majority of them 90th veterans - began to correspond regularly with Levaufre, sharing information that often led to other information. In 1969, Levaufre came to the United States to attend what would turn out to be the first of many 90th Association meetings.

"It was a very special experience for me. I got to meet the people I had read so much about. I felt like I knew them well," Levaufre said.

Word of Levaufre's interests spread through the ranks of the veterans. They wrote him letters. They called. They came to France and visited.

Over the years since then, Levaufre estimates that he has met "thousands" of Tough 'Ombres and their families. Through these meetings he has collected detailed records - letters, journals, photos and official documents - detailing the 90th's actions.

Although he has earned accolades, including the Army's Distinguished Civilian Service Medal, for his work, Levaufre said he continues to chronicle the 90th for personal reasons. "These men lost their limbs and their lives to free my country. It gives me a special feeling to help these men and their families to understand what happened to them during the war," Levaufre said.

Sappers lead the way!

498th Engineer's Charlie Company

By Sgt 1st Class Rodney D. Campbell

For the sixth June in a row, members of Company C, 489th Engineer Battalion spent their recent drill competing for the distinction of best combat engineer squad as the unit conducted its annual Sapper Stakes competition.

Combat Engineers are often referred to as sappers. This term can be traced back as far as the 16th century when military engineers would use tree saplings in the construction and repair of fortifications.

Since the introduction of the Sapper Stakes competition by the unit's former commander, the sappers assigned to Charlie Company look forward to this challenge every year.

This year, eight sapper squads competed in various events to demonstrate their technical and tactical knowledge and expertise. With the actual tasks being kept secret until the evening prior, the soldiers had to react to the missions just as if they were being tasked during actual battle.

Early Saturday morning, the squads, comprised of seven to eight combat engineers, were transported to the training site. Upon arrival they were given various missions to complete and were scored on their proficiency.

The day began with a mission to resupply a national friendly reconnaissance team that could not continue without certain supplies. The squad was to transport ammunition, food, water, a spare tire and other items to a designated location within a limited time.

What the squads did not know was that, prior to arriving at the rendezvous point, they were going to receive enemy fire. During the firefight, each squad was to suffer a casualty, which had to be carried by litter to a medical evacuation point.

"We had just reached the top of the first hill with all of this equipment and we started taking fire by enemy snipers," explained squad leader Sgt. Brian W. Drewry, "We immediately took cover

and engaged the enemy when someone yelled 'we've lost the tire!'"

Drewry said the tire which his squad was delivering to the friendly recon team was inadvertently let go and rolled down a hill and rested in the bottom of a ravine about 150 yards away.

"We were able to destroy the enemy, but we also suffered a casualty. We then had to recover the tire, the rest of the equipment, litter our casualty to the (medical evacuation) point and continue the mission. But, we accomplished the mission on time and our casualty reached the medics in time to save his life, too," Drewry said.

The first mission was just a hint of things to come. Each squad had to complete a land navigation course using only a map and compass. They had to demonstrate their ability to throw hand grenades at enemy positions, perform preventative maintenance on a Mine-Clearing Line Charge (MICLIC) system, compete for time in a construction project, use military communication equipment and take a physical fitness test.

Army engineers must use explosives to perform their wartime mission and must train on these tasks to keep their skills finely tuned. As part of the Sapper Stakes, the squad was briefed that they had to prove their ability to tie particular demolition knots as part of the competition. Upon reaching this event, the squad was surprised to learn that they had to conduct this task while wearing their chemical protective masks and gloves.

"Most of our soldiers are very proficient with demo knots," said site evaluator Staff Sgt Roger D. Hulland. "But, when I informed them that they had just entered a contaminated environment, the look on their faces was priceless."

"Although not as fast, the majority of our soldiers still received near perfect scores for the event." Hulland explained that soldiers must be prepared to perform their mission in a chemical, biological or nuclear environment.

Near the end of the timed road march, squads were informed that one of their squad members had become a casualty. They used a litter to evacuate the casualty across the finish line.



charges through annual competition

After a long, rigorous day and completion of the technical tasks, the squads finished the day off with a road march to compete for the best time. The route used was a mile of rolling hills and rough terrain with each soldier carrying his military gear.

Sunday morning found the soldiers a little sore, but rested up and in suspense to the announcement of the winning squad.

During a ceremony conducted at the Charles L. Gilliland United States Army Reserve Center, Capt. Kirk M. Claunch, commander of Charlie Company declared the winning squad and presented plaques to each of its members.

"Every soldier here is a winner," Claunch explained to his company of sappers.

"The final scores are extremely close, indicating that each and every one of you are among the finest engineers in the Army."

"Each of you was challenged mentally and physically in probably some of the toughest training you can be exposed to short of war. I am proud of your motivation, your professionalism and your drive to succeed."

In addition to the winning squad, six other soldiers were awarded Army Achievement Medals for their performance during the events. These soldiers were nominated by the evaluators and the squad leaders for their overall team spirit, motivation and performance during the competition.

Members of the winning squad were: Sgt. Randy Bishop of Little Rock, Ark., Sgt. Brian Drewry of Harrison, Ark., Pfc. Travis Honeycutt of Harrison, Spec. Shane Dickson of Rogersville, Mo., Spc. Larry Collins of Mountain Home, Ark., and Spec. David Sanders of Hollister, Ark. Charlie Company is located in Harrison with a detachment in Fayetteville.

The unit is comprised of combat engineers and construction equipment operators who fulfill their Army Reserve military duty.

"We can't brag enough about our soldiers," stated 1st Lt. Samuel E. Forester. "Their dedication to this unit is unsurpassed. We have members who drive in from all over the state of Arkansas and Missouri, Texas, Oklahoma and even one who lives in New Orleans."

Forester concluded by saying that most Americans have very busy lives and don't want to waste their time. "It's the same in the Army Reserve, whatever you do with your time, do it right."



Above: Sgt. Brian Drewry rolls a tire uphill after inadvertently losing it during a firefight with the enemy.

Below: Soldiers competed with other squads on their ability to throw hand grenades into enemy positions.

Right: Along with push-ups, sit-ups, and a relay run, squad members had to perform as many pull-ups as possible. The winning squad comprised of seven soldiers knocked out over 1800 repetitions in 30 minutes.



172d CSG Staff Sgt. unites service members with education

Tough Ombre soldiers are encouraged to take charge and do what's right even when no directives are in place. Staff Sgt. Michael Scott Craft of the 172nd Corps Support Group in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma is one of those soldiers who "rode to the sound of the guns."

A graduate of Oklahoma Wesleyan University (OWU), Craft saw an opportunity for his fellow soldiers to better themselves and developed a plan along with Dr. Phillip Beatty, Director of OWU's adult studies program. Together, they formed an agreement allowing soldiers to take accelerated classes for an associate's degree in business administration, a bachelor's degree in business leadership and administration, or a bachelor's degree in human resources at a very affordable cost.

The school agreed to subsidize the overriding cost not paid by the government, resulting in a savings of \$1,800 to \$2,400 per soldier. For 30 soldiers, that translated to \$65,000-\$70,000 in savings. Additionally, the university modified its non-traditional courses to better suit scheduling for its military students.

Oklahoma Wesleyan University generously offered the degrees, charging the soldiers just \$35.00 per month for 26 months, for courses leading to the associate's degree in business administration. Soldiers in the bachelor's degree programs are charged \$95.00 per month for the 18-to-21 month course. Soldiers are responsible for the cost of their textbooks.

"Today, one of the main priorities for soldiers remaining in the military is satisfaction through education," said Craft. "If we keep soldiers progressing in their education, they will in

turn, provide the military with a more motivated, valuable, knowledgeable and educated soldier." While the soldiers benefit from their education, the university gains valuable alumni as word of the program spreads to more soldiers. As a direct result of this agreement, seven soldiers have enrolled in the associate's degree program and 23 soldiers are enrolled in the bachelor's degree programs. Three of these soldiers graduated in May 2002. Additionally, Staff Sgt. Craft has worked with area recruiters to provide both enhanced educational opportunities for recruiters, and to provide that extra incentive for potential recruits deciding on a military career.

Craft is the group's PSNCO, and has served as the Education NCO since September 2000. He attended the education seminar from Project Educate 101 and was inspired to do all that he could to service the educational needs of his soldiers and local recruiters. At the present time, twenty percent of the headquarters and headquarters company enlisted personnel are participating in higher education programs. Prior to the start of this program, HHC had two soldiers enrolled in college.

By July 2003, twelve people from the 172nd CSG are scheduled to graduate with either an associate's or bachelor's degree. In the next five years, the goal is to have 100 soldiers within the Bartlesville, Afton, McAlister and Tulsa areas enrolled in some sort of college degree program.

As a result of the agreement, the college joined the Serviceman's Opportunity College (SOC) network and is expanding to facilitate additional Army requirements by providing a masters degree in business administration in the near future.

458th's mail delivery helps exercise morale at NTC

by Spc. Kevin A. Lovel

363rd PAD, 89 RSC

VICTORVILLE, CALIF...Four Army Reserve soldiers from the 458th Adjutant General Company (Postal), Ada, Okla., recently provided morale-boosting postal service during its annual training at Victorville, Calif.

The 458th fulfilled its goal of connecting reservists who were training during Exercise Mojave Strike 2002 to their loved ones back home.

The 458th soldiers picked up the mail from the main post office at Fort Irwin, Calif., sorted it and routed it to Army Reservists serving at sites in Victorville, Yermo Marine Corps Railroad Depot and the Intermediate Movement Center at Fort Irwin.

"It was good training to prepare us for possible wartime missions," said Spc.

Edward A. Marshal, a 458th postal operator.

"This is an irregular mission compared to most of our past annual trainings," said 458th postal supervisor Sgt. 1st Class Douglas W. Denson, who, in civilian life, is an auditor with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"Usually, on annual training, we go to an Army post overseas and work in an existing post office, doing all their normal duties such as selling stamps and weighing packages," said Spc. Alexandria Shelton, 458th postal operator and a Veterans Administration assistant at East Central University in Ada.

"Here, in the field environment, we made necessary adjustments, such as taking turns on guard duty. We intended to be part of the exercise and it took us

about two days after we arrived to be fully operational for this mission," said Denson.

"We pretty much started from scratch, since there was no existing post office to work out of," Shelton added.

Just as the U.S. Postal Service had had to tighten security due to terrorist threats and actions, the reserve units also had to make sure packages and letters were checked thoroughly. "If a package had an odd smell, didn't have a return address or appeared to be written in children's handwriting, we reported to the Custodian of Postal Effects, who checked the package or letter with a machine that can see through the package," explained Marshal.

"Providing good morale for the troops in the field made our job doubly worthwhile," Denson concluded.

Island from page 3

There is a new low fat diet on the island, which lists foods that can be eaten liberally and those that should be metered, if not avoided. Cole said that it was recommended that dog, Spam and turkey tail be eaten only three times per week. Spam is a Western delicacy and used liberally in sushi, fried rice and stir-fry.

The PAs usually saw 20 to 30 patients per week in the CAT camp clinic and 15 to 20 patients during the weekly MEDCAP visits. The most common ills were upper respiratory infections and dermatology issues.

According to Lew, a typical period of visits included 16 cases of skin/fungal infection, six cases of headache, four lacerations, two red eye cases and one each of worms, chronic cough, dog bite, diarrhea, ear pain, cough, gout, malaria and six hospital

referral for diabetic problems. Lew is on an extended 179-day tour.

She tests for pests and other sanitation violations that include food service areas, clinic areas and camp water supplies each week. She also continues to teach a health, fitness and wellness course, a first aid course, preventive medicine classes, a child dental and nutrition class and an aerobics course to seniors in two villages. She also gives a weekly health update on island radio.

"I was able to provide basic services and the islanders were grateful for everything," said Cole. "They are simple, sweet people who enjoy the basics of life and warmly welcome all who want to share their culture. I consider this one of the sentinel experiences of my life."

Inspectors from page17

to hide poor quality produce at the bottom thinking we wouldn't check everything."

"We send it right back," added Sgt. Raymond Browner, who was busy breaking several cucumbers in half to check out the inside. "If we miss it here, the Army pays for it and then someone could eat it, possibly getting sick and that puts a burden on others to take up the slack of the missing soldier. And don't forget we're also looking for deliberate sabotage of the food. There are people in this world who would do the unthinkable if they knew they could get away with it. We do our best and we are thorough."

Like the parachute rigger who must jump with only the parachutes he or she has packed, the 994th soldiers also must eat the food they approve.

"On MREs, we check for damage and leakage," said Browner. There's the obvious damage caused by forklifts or pallets puncturing the boxes. When this is discovered, it requires that the individual meals in that case be checked for damage. Even if the external plastic pouch of an MRE is not perforated it does not mean that the internal packets have not ruptured due to the impact. "We also check for insect and rodent infestation, bloated packages (indicating bacteria growth) as well as expiration dates," Browner said.

The inspectors also look for signs of pests. Rodents, particularly mice, like to get into the boxes where they can take up a residence that comes with its own buffet. Gelsthorpe knows the different types of holes that appear in packages and what causes them. Holes that are rounded out with edges that are not too jagged indicate rodent damage, while mechanical damage is usually jagged and appears more like a puncture. The size of the hole helps to indicate the type of rodent. Rat infestation usually includes greasy stains around the hole and reddish hairs stuck to the edge. Rat fur is greasier than mouse fur and the grease stains

the edges as a rat squeezes through the opening. Each country also brings with it other types of indigenous species that can pose additional health threats.

Sgt. Dedrick Mayo and Gelsthorpe opened a large warehouse where pallets of MREs were stored on racks 20 feet high.

"We get MREs in all the time and we ship them out all the time," said Mayo. "This is the last line of defense for possible food-borne illnesses to be stopped before a soldier in the field eats the MRE. Fortunately, people usually know something is spoiled or just not right as soon as they smell or taste it."

If a soldier suspects that something is spoiled or compromised in some way they should throw it away. However the problem could be more serious if, for example, an infantryman is out in the middle of nowhere and all the food the Army gave him is no good. His duty location or combat situation and environment may cause him to have nothing else to eat for quite a while. Obviously, the ability for him and his fellow soldiers to accomplish their mission is reduced. Even simple cases of food poisoning can lead to nausea and diarrhea that can incapacitate an entire unit's mission effectiveness.

Most soldiers like MREs and some horde them like pack rats. However, some soldiers have a great disdain for them and refuse to eat them altogether.

These soldiers prefer to buy and carry with them their own food, commonly referred to as "pogey bait" in infantry circles. Sometimes extended field duty forces these MRE holdouts to join their comrades for an MRE when their pogey bait runs out (although they probably use all the hot sauce). For Mayo, Gelsthorpe and other 994th members they have no choice. They are required to inspect each lot number of MREs. Part of the inspection process includes opening individual meals, checking codes on each packet and sampling each shipment lot. If a lot is large they must sample more meals, but fortunately, these guys like MREs.

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The official crest designed for the 90th Division and still worn by the Tough ‘Ombres of today reflects a long and proud history. The unit’s World War I service in France is represented by the vertical arrow shaft, while the head of the arrow and the gold lion behind it (derived from the coat of arms of Normandy, France) signify participation in the amphibious assault at Normandy during World War II. The white star denotes the Texas origin of the unit and the five points further represent the campaign credits for World War II service in Europe. Awards of the French Croix de Guerre and Meritorious Unit Commendation are represented by the crossed bayonets.

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